

REMARKS

Caims 9-20 and 35-46 are currently pending.

The Examiner asserts that the claims are directed to the following species: Group I, encoding, decoding and transmitting to a hosted electronic procurement system; Group II, encoding, decoding, and transmitting to a multiple executable procurement system; and Group III, encoding, decoding and transmitting to a hosted executable procurement system.

Groups I, II and III appear to be the same, except that these groups relate to a hosted electronic procurement system, a multiple executable procurement system, and a hosted executable procurement system, respectively.

The Applicants do not understand why the Examiner has separated the claims into the above-described Groups I, II and III, and do not fully understand the Groups. For example, the language used by the Examiner to describe the Groups (that is, the Examiner's language of a hosted electronic procurement system, a multiple executable procurement system, and a hosted executable procurement system) appears to correspond to language recited in only a few of the dependent claims. For example, dependent claims 15-17 and 41-43 recite language which appears to be related to the Groups identified by the Examiner.

Moreover, the Applicants note that the preambles of claims 9-20 recite a "method". Claims 35-46 are similar, respectively, to claims 9-20, but have preambles that recite a "computer-readable storage medium". Therefore, it is believed that claims 35-46 are substantially similar to claims 9-20, and should be considered together with claims 9-20.

In view of the above, in a best efforts to comply with the Election/Restriction Requirement, the Applicants elect a species which includes claims 9-14, 17-20, 35-40, and 43-46, without traverse. Please note that these elected claims include dependent claims 17 and 43, which recite "a shared executable hosted electronic procurement system". Therefore, it is assumed that these dependent claims are in Group III identified by the Examiner.

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For reasons described above, it is assumed that dependent claims 15-16 and 41-42 would not be included in the elected Species. However, it is respectfully submitted that these dependent claims should be allowed if the independent claims are allowed.

Respectfully submitted,
STAAS & HALSEY LLP

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By: Paul I. Kravetz
Paul I. Kravetz
Registration No. 35, 230

1201 New York Avenue, NW, 7th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501